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The **Voyage** *of* **Colombo**

**A DESCRIPTIVE
POEM**



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WRITTEN BY EDW. H. M. MONAGHAN

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THE VOYAGE OF COLOMBO.

A Descriptive Poem.

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WRITTEN BY EDW. H. M. MONAGHAN.

Brightly the sun rose on that distant morn
In Spanish harbor. Palos saw the dawn
Auspicious rise, that link'd her ancient name
To after times with an undying fame.
Long as the annals of the deep blue sea
Are link'd with those of great discovery !
Long as Colombo's name with praise is hail'd
Remember'd be the port from which he sailed !
That now is decked in holiday attire,
From house-top, battlement, and glitt'ring spire.
The colors and the emblems of proud Spain
Float gayly o'er the land and wat'ry plain.
Now ev'ry house within the quaint old town
Displays some emblem of the Spanish crown
And dancing boats upon the azure tide,
From mast-head each reflect their owner's pride.
And ev'ry bosom beats with hope today
Devout, and earnestly to God they pray,
That in His wisdom He will guide the way,
Of that bold mariner across the sea,
Who goes to pierce the veil of mystery,
And ignorance, that like a dark'n'd cloud,
Enwraps the western ocean with its shroud.
And Spain with him will reap a new-born glory,
That shall adorn the annals of her story,
Upon the world's proud scroll. There men shall read,
In after times, of his immortal deed.

So thinks the hero as he treads the deck
 Of his frail craft ; nor fears, his vessel's wreck,
 Though well he knows this vet'ran of the seas,
 Old Neptune's moods, and ev'ry shifting breeze,
 From each, and ev'ry quarter that they blow,
 That in their fury naught of mercy know.
 Yet thinks he not of raging tempests now,
 There's naught but confidence upon his brow,
 And gratitude to that fair sov'reign queen,
 Without whose aid, this voyage had not been.
 She was to him what stars to sailors are
 A beam on high, a steady light afar,
 That ever shone upon his dreary path,
 Through disappointing trials, and the wrath
 Of Fortune, through long years of dreary strife,
 To this, the supreme moment of his life.
 He knows her faith in him he will redeem,
 And prove his theories no idle dream.
 The anchor's weigh'd Adieus and pray'rs are said,
 The breeze is fair, the sails are quickly spread,
 They move upon their way, amid the cheers
 Of thousands there, and long within the ears,
 Of those bold mariners, the tone rebounds,
 Till distance parts, and faint the echo sounds.
 Full soon these hardy venturers of the seas,
 Have passed the pillars of great Hercules,
 And dim the land of Spain grows on their view,
 And other thoughts, and duties rise anew.
 The friendly craft that follow'd in their wake,
 Can go no further, one by one they take
 Their leave, while these pursue their journey lone,
 Upon the broad and vast expanse unknown.
 So long invested with a fearful spell,
 Of brain-born terror, like some horrid hell,
 Where monsters of the sea like devils dwelt,
 Where fearful storms, and scorching beams would melt.

And centuries had multiplied this kind,
 Of ignorant error o'er the human mind.
 But soon the light of Knowledge will disperse,
 This mental darkness of the Universe.
 And thou, Colombo, wilt her champion be,
 When thou returnest with the victory !
 But like the waves upon the heaving deep
 The days roll by, and thou thy vigils keep !
 No sign of land by day, no sign by night !
 When silent stars like watchful eyes look bright,
 And doubts and superstitious fears arise,
 Amongst thy crew beneath the lonely skies,
 They touch their foreheads and with furtive looks,
 They read each other's thoughts as they were books,
 The Admiral is mad ! They surely think,
 And he is leading them unto the brink
 Of certain death. He must be overthrown
 Is mutter'd in a low and furtive tone.
 Had they not seen a sure and certain sign,
 That God had frown'd upon the bold design,
 That with a curious, and impious eye,
 Into his most sacred mysteries would pry ?
 Last night, two stars, with ev'ry sign of wrath,
 Shot from their spheres, and cross'd each other's path,
 As they went down the dome of heaven, both
 Were quenched in night, and gloom, far towardst he south,
 While long and lurid streams of flame shot forth
 Across the skies, directly from the north,
 Whose light upon the wave inspir'd fear,
 In all who saw, that death was hov'ring near.
 Besides, the needle seamen's safest guide,
 When far from land upon the ocean' wide
 No longer pointed true as heretofore,
 A something strange and never known before,
 To the north star her point was ever true ;
 But now 'twas under some strange influence too.

What 'ere the cause, Colombo did not pause,
 In dread that Nature varied in her laws,
 But steadily kept upon his destined way
 Through gath'ring perils that increas'd each day,
 Amid the clamors of his boistrous crew,
 Whose shallow doubts, and fickle fears he knew
 Would seek to have him give the voyage o'er,
 And to return and tempt the fates no more !
 Oh ! return ! retrace ! while yet you may
 Your homeward path, o'er the wide wat'ry way !
 Such were the cries, the ever plaintive fears
 Continually sounding in thine ears.
 And there were bitter murmers deep, and loud,
 And looks, as dark, as a gath'ring thunder cloud,
 Full charg'd with pent up hate were bent on thee,
 The destin'd victim of conspiracy !
 Their purpose dark, to throw thee in the sea !
 And then to head the vessels o'er the main
 Back to the distant land of sunny Spain.
 No doubt thou didst invoke the aid of pray'r,
 Thou seem'd protected by a Divine care,
 About to be a sacrifice to fear,
 Some happy sign of land would then appear,
 To soothe and to restrain their rising wrath,
 And lure them on o'er the wide ocean path.
 Hark ! from the mast-head amid the shrouds,
 There comes a voice, as though t'were from the clouds,
 A ringing joyful shout of " Land ahoy ! "
 Oh ! ever bless'd, and welcome sound of joy !
 That does these dismal, gathering fears destroy !
 The setting sun had sunk upon the wave,
 It was the lovely hour Devotion gave
 The " Holy Virgin," curtain like it fell,
 Upon the wave, with a calm and holy spell.
 The seamen join'd, and raised the hymn of pray'r,
 And soon all bitterness was silenc'd there.

SAILOR'S PRAYER.

I.

Ave Maria ! Mother mild !
 Listen to a sailor's pray'r,
 Oh ! safely waft us o'er the ocean wild,
 Grant to us, thy breezes fair !

II.

Ave Maria ! Star of the sea !
 Look down from thy high place,
 And watch, and guard us in extremity,
 Extend to us thy grace !

III.

Ave Maria ! Sailors hope !
 When the storm rolls on the sea,
 When winds and waves, in savage fury cope,
 For the palm of mastery !

IV.

Ave Maria ! Mother of God !
 To thee we pray tonight,
 That thou will intercede, and stay the rod,
 From falling in its might !

Like incense sweet that pray'r to heaven rose,
 And night fell on the wave in calm repose,
 And long they keep the vigils of the night,
 'Till morning dawns, and stars fade in the light.
 Now where's the land that on their vision grew,
 Alas ! 'tis gone there is no shore in view !
 Far as the eye can pierce the wat'ry plain
 There's naught but sky and ocean's vast domain.
 The land ye hail'd with joyous shouts aloud,

Was but the passing of an evening cloud !
 And now with this their disappointed hope,
 Thou hast again their rising fears to cope ;
 But soon some other sign of land appears
 To soothe, and to restrain their gloomy fears.
 Such as, the lonely note, of some stray bird,
 That seldom from its native fields is heard,
 A lonely note ! but yet to them as dear
 As that of angel from seraphic sphere !
 Nor this the only sign that came to tell
 Of land. There were full other signs as well,
 A branch with berries drifting on the wave,
 A hope of land as bright a welcome gave.
 But yet, their hearts grow weary with delay
 For many days had slowly pass'd away,
 And when no land appear'd to greet their view,
 They too a frenzied desperation grew,
 And swore the signs of land that met their eye,
 Were those of some small island long pass'd by.
 For now indeed, they had become alarm'd,
 The winds, and ocean, now, were both becalmed,
 The death-like calm ! had added terrors then
 More so than stormy waves, for they were men
 Of rugged forms, by nature hard, and brave,
 And oft had sailed upon the stormy wave.
 But the still solemn calm of lonely ocean,
 Where winds could not the vessels keep in motion,
 While idly drifting o'er the sluggish tides,
 With scarce a ripple breaking on their sides,
 Had something more for them than mere alarm.
 They fancied they were anchor'd in a calm,
 Where elemental strife was all in vain,
 Where no fair wind would waft them home again.
 They would have turn'd the vessels prows' about,
 And with the oars have plied their homeward route,
 But thou with censure and judicious praise,

Prevail'd with them to keep the path three days,
 If at the end no certain sign of land
 Appear'd to greet their view thou wouldst command
 The home return, and of their sovereign ask,
 Another crew to consummate the task.
 But soon the ever welcome freshening breeze
 Comes sweeping o'er the lone and stagnant seas,
 Creating a lively and inspiring motion,
 And swiftly wafting them athwart the ocean.
 And now so fast increase the signs of land,
 All eyes are strain'd to view the distant strand,
 All eagerness to win the promis'd prize,
 Their sovereign's royal gift to him whose eyes
 Should first behold the land. On the last night
 Thou didst observe a dim and wandering light,
 As o'er the wave it faintly flash'd anon,
 Sure sign of land seen at the breaking dawn.
 Kneel ! Kneel ! now let the loud Te Deum peal !
 And render God, the sincere thanks ye feel !
 For now at length the weary voyage is past
 And hope is realiz'd in part at last,
 Though it was not the land of legends old,
 With crowded cities, and palaces roof'd with gold,
 Yet in the silent continent so vast,
 Were empires that had seen the distant past
 Of dim and buried centuries, whose glories
 Might equal those of visionary stories !
 Reserv'd for other men to lead the way
 O'er mountains, and through wilds, to where they lay.
 Cortez, and Pizaro, of a latter day,
 Didst follow in thy path and conquer'd these,
 The Aztec and Peruvian monarchies !
 But thou didst find the newly discover'd shore,
 Both thickly wooded and well peopled o'er
 By dusky natives, whose rude homes were made
 Deep in the depths of trackless forest shade,

Or near some peaceful lake where wild deer stray'd.
 Here they their families rear'd, their children play'd,
 And learn'd the solemn language of the wood,
 These children of great Nature's solitude.
 There knowledge gather'd by a simple rule,
 Nature, their only book, their only school,
 Oft spoke to them in many varied voices,
 And taught them rugged virtue free from vices.
 No hum of busy insect, or note of bird,
 But was familiar sound to them when heard,
 No animal of the forest whose cunning care,
 Could from the Indian hunter hide his lair,
 And well the virtue of the herbs they knew,
 That in the fields, and in the forest grew.
 The gentle summer's balmy evening breeze,
 That softly stirr'd by night the forest leaves,
 And wak'd soft sounds, that midst the forest rose,
 To lull the wearied Indian to repose.
 In that still solemn hour spoke to his soul,
 Of a wondrous spirit land a distant goal,
 Where earthly sorrows were forever ended,
 Where earthly joys were ever sweetly blended !
 A happy hunting ground, with forests filled with game,
 With sunny fields, where cold or famine never came !
 Sad must the fate be of a race or nation,
 They cannot keep pace with civilization,
 Destin'd to sink beneath the rushing tide
 Of Time, as it sweeps along a torrent wide !

INDIAN SPIRIT.

DEATH SONG.

I.

Though cities in grandeur now stand,
 Where the trees of the forest wav'd o'er,
 Where the wigwam throughout the broad land,

Serv'd as dwellings for ages before,
 Yet the white man shall hear a deep sigh,
 In the dash of the waves on the shore,
 And the winds on the mountain so high,
 Shall mourn for the race that's no more !

II.

Like the wither'd brown leaves that are strewn
 On the ground, the rude sport of the blast,
 Like the days of the year that has flown,
 So the red men will perish at last.
 And the night of their darkness is near,
 'Tis approaching with speed all so fast,
 When the Indian's hope, and his fear,
 Shall forever be lost in the past !

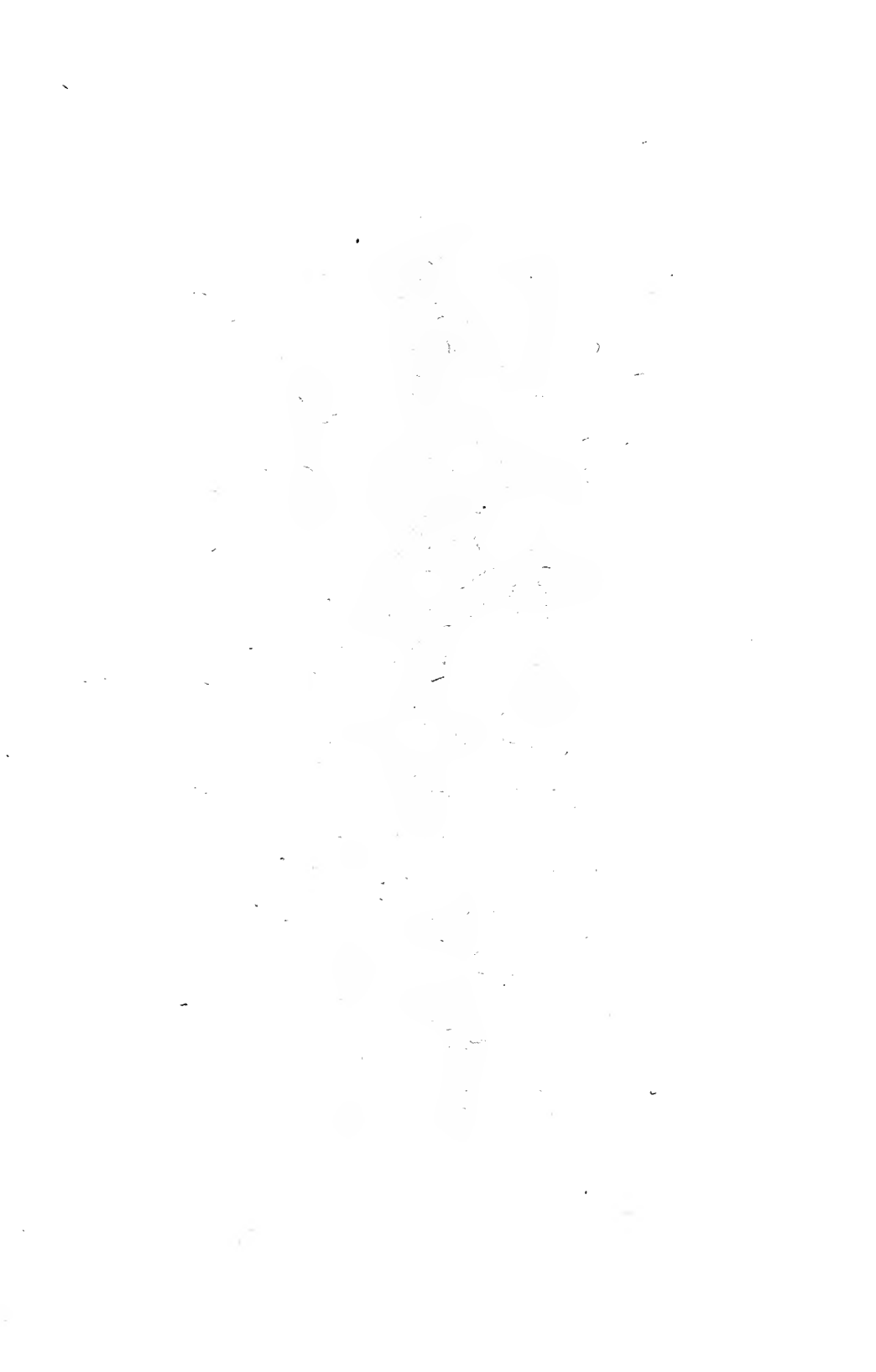
III.

In the path of the sun they have ta'en,
 Their wearisome desolate way,
 Left the lands of their fathers' forsa'en
 To the white man and stranger a prey,
 There's a beam, 'tis the last fading light,
 That lingers around dying day,
 But will vanish in darkness of night,
 Like that beam they will thus pass away !

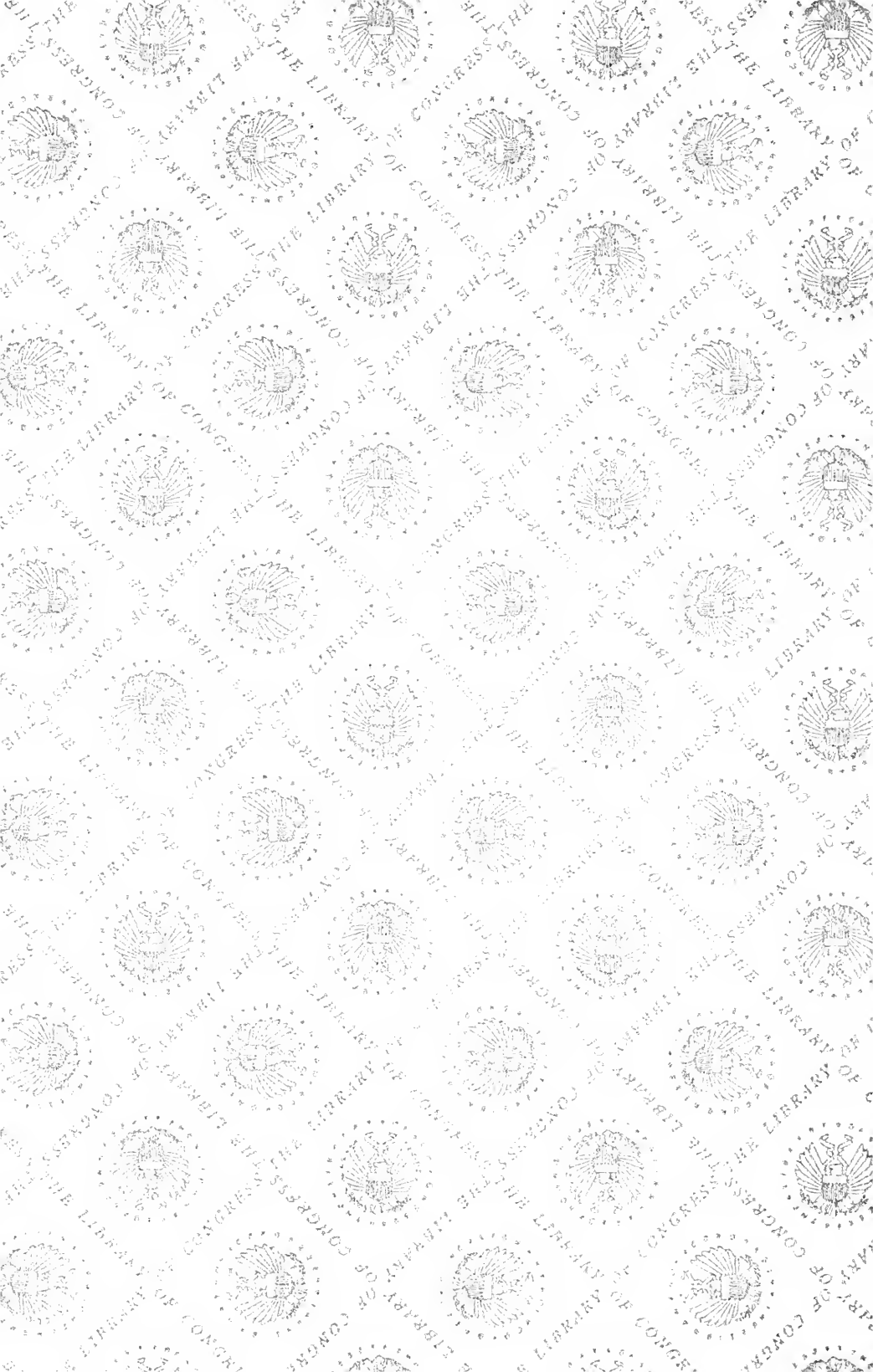
Now when the perils of the voyage were o'er,
 And safe within the haven of the shore,
 Thy vessels moor'd at anchor, came to rest,
 Who can describe emotions of thy breast ?
 'Tis known thou wast inspir'd by the truth,
 Bas'd on thy studies from thy early youth,

And long experience upon the seas,
Which had'st confirm'd thy book learn'd theories,
A satisfaction to thine honest pride,
But when thou didst bethink of Him who died,
Upon the Calvary cross, to save mankind,
A glowing fervor thrill'd thy heart and mind,
Above all others, nobler, grander far,
It fill'd thy soul and was thy guiding star,
To bring a knowledge of Thy grace Divine,
Oh, Christ ! unto this lowly race of Thine !



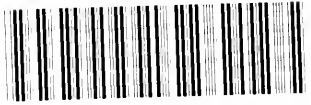








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